

# Kodumbalur –Irukkuvel A Velir Maravan



Kodambalur is a small village in Pudukkottai district in Tamilnadu. The village is one of the most ancient place in the district and its earliest reference is found in *Silappatikaram*<sup>1</sup> as Kodumbai, a village situated by bund of a large tank on the way from Uraiyur (at present neighborhood in Tiruchirapalli) to Madura (modern Madurai). The village is also famous for the birthplace of Idangazhi Nayanar, one of the sixty-three Nayanar saints. [Periyapuram](#) mentions that he was an Irukku Velir chief ruling Konadu region with Kodumpalur as its capital. The text describes the capital city as:

*"Kodumpaaloora of Konaadu is the capital in whose Ponds and tanks of cool and lucid waters, Chafers buzz over fragrant and melliferous red lotuses And drink their honey; there the storks and their mates Get well fed and these, to shun the moist northern wind Slumber in the gardens of Kurukkatthi."*

By the end of sixth century CE, after the Kalabhra interregnum ended, Tamilnadu came under the rule of two major dynasties, the Pallavas in the north and the Pandyas in the south. Pudukkottai region acted as a buffer state between these two till the advent of the Cholas in the mid-ninth century CE. The region kept shuffling its allegiance between these two dynasties at different

periods. Northern part of Pudukkottai was under the rule of the Mutharaiyars while the southern was with the Irukkuvels. Kodumbalur, the capital town of the Irukkuvels, became the scene of various battles and conflicts during 8th century CE when Nandivarman II (731-796 CE) ascended the Pallava throne. His accession was contested by other Pallava princes and they were helped by the Pandyas. In the end, it was the Pallavas who emerged victorious. Kodumbalur may have played an important part in these battles. We gather from the Sendalai pillar inscriptions<sup>2</sup> that Perumbidugu Mutharaiyar alias Suvaran Maran, king of Tanjai (present Thanjavur), gained victory at Kodumbalur. He also defeated the people of Konadu in the battle of Kannanur and a Pandya chief at Tinalur. The inscription is silent on the Mutharaiyar's adversary in the battle of Kodumbalur. A different picture emerges from the Pandya inscriptions. The Velvikudi grant<sup>3</sup> mentions that Maravarman Rajasimha alias Ter Maran (730-765 CE) gained victory at Kodumbalur and defeated the Pallavas at Kulumbur. As both the parties claim victories at Kodumbalur, it may be that they are referring to two different battles, however what is clear that the Pallavas emerged victorious with Nandivarman II putting an end of all revolts.

Two centuries later, Kodumbalur again witnessed a clash between the Pandyas and the Cholas (or Mutharaiyars), as we infer from the large [Sinnamanur grant](#)<sup>4</sup> that Maravarman Rajasimha III (900-920 CE), surnamed Vikatavadava and Mandaragaurava, drove the king of Tanjai in the battle of Naippur and won a battle at Kodumbai and destroyed the lord of the southern Tanjai country Naval.

Brahma from Kodumbalur now in Art Institute Chicago

Among the Irukkuvel chiefs of Kodumbalur, the most famous was Bhuti Vikramakesari, the founder of the *Moovar Koil*. The foundation inscription in the temple provides various details of the illustrious Irukkuvel family. The family traces its lineage to the *Yadavas*, the clan of *Lord Krishna* of *Dwarka*. Paradurgamardhana, the grandfather of Bhuti Vikramakesari, is said to have conquered Vatapi (present Badami), the traditional capital of the Western Chalukyas. His father, Samarabhirama, is told to have killed Chalukki in the battle of Adhirajamangala. Bhuti's mother, Anupama, was a Chola princess. The inscription mentions that king Bhuti Vikramakesari fought against the Pallavas and the Pandyas. He named his sons Parantaka and Adityavarman, probably after his Chola sovereigns. From the inscription we can gather that the family was ruling over Kodumbalur from a significant period and they were connected to the Cholas matrimonially, making them taking side of the Cholas against the latter's fights with the Pallavas and the Pandyas.

Dating of Bhuti Vikramakesari is a matter of controversy. Venkataranga Raju<sup>5</sup> was probably the first to date the Moovar Koil in tenth century CE thus putting Bhuti Vikramakesari to the same period. With the discovery of the Kilur inscription of the Pallavas, K G Krishnan<sup>6</sup> suggests that Maravan Pudi alias

Tennavan Ilangovelar is same as Bhuti Vikramakesari making him contemporary to the Pallava king Nandivarman III (846-869 CE) and the Chola king Aditya I (871-907 CE). S R Balasubrahmanyam<sup>7</sup> reassess all evidences and rejects identification of Maravan Pudi with Bhuti Vikramakesari. He concludes that Bhuti Vikramakesari should be considered as a contemporary of Sundara Chola (957-970 CE) and Aditya II. His theory is based upon two main arguments, 1) the paleography of the inscription favors 10<sup>th</sup> century CE, 2) there is no Pandya king bearing name Vira Pandya with title *Cholantalaikonda* ("who took the head of the Chola") contemporary to Parantaka I. Douglas Barrett agrees with Balasubrahmanyam taking Bhuti Vikramakesari as a contemporary of Sundara Chola.

No. 48.

(A.R. Nos. 88 of 1910 and 529 of 1905).

TIRUVELLARAI, LALGUDI TALUK, TRICHINOPOLY DISTRICT.

ON A ROCK IN FRONT OF THE JAMBUNĀTHASVĀMIN TEMPLE.

This inscription was partially copied in 1905 and then completely in 1910 after removing a wall obstructing a portion of the record. The middle portion of the inscription is damaged being chiselled away right through to construct a drain. It appears to be dated in the 6th year of Pallava-Mahārāja alias Danti-Nandivarman of the Bhāra[dvāja-gōtra] and Brahmakshatra family. The king's name, in the form given here, implies that Nandivarman was the son of Dantivarman. The inscription seems to record the praise of a certain Sellikkōmān Mallavān who is described as the nephew of Paraśirāman and the uncle of Maraviṇḍu Ilangovelān Sāttan. The record is stated to have been composed by a certain Peruṅgāvidi Śaḍaiyaṇṇaḷli.

Pullis are marked in the record in some cases.

<sup>1</sup> See also *Inscriptions (Texts) of the Pudukkottai State*, No. 15.

<sup>2</sup> A portion of the inscription is published in *Sen Tamil*, Vol. III, p. 199.

S. I. I.—5

Nandivikramavarman, where the donor is stated to be the wife of Sāttan Maravan and the daughter of Vikrama-Pūdi who is probably identical with Videividugu Ilankō-Adiaraiyaṇ mentioned in the same record.

Text.

- 1 ஸ்ரீமதி பூதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 1 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 2 ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 2 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 3 நதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 3 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 4 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 4 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 5 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 5 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 6 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 6 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 7 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 7 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 8 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 8 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 9 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 9 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 10 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 10 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 11 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 11 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 12 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 12 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்
- 13 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன் . . . . . 13 கை ஸ்ரீமதிவிக்ரமவரமன்

K V Soundara Rajan<sup>8</sup> mentions that by series of complicated equations based on epigraphical data, Maravan Pudi alias Tennavan Ilangovelar alias Bhuti Vikramakesari has now been established to be a senior contemporary of the Chola king Aditya I (871-907 CE). He writes, "*The paleography, the contents of the inscription, and the style of the building, however, all clearly suggest that the temple is at least three generations older than the time of Sundara Chola (AD 956-973) with whom such authorities have attempted to associate Bhuti Vikramakesari.*" N Sethuraman<sup>9</sup> explains that the first Vira Pandya who assumed the title Cholantalaikonda was an early contemporary of Parantaka Chola and probably distinguished himself in the battle of Kodumbalur against Bhuti Vikramakesari. He should be distinguished from Vira Pandya who was killed by



**No. 924.**

(A.R. No. 295 of 1902).

ON A ROCK IN THE PRAKARA OF THE SAME TEMPLE.

- 1 ஸுஷி ஸ்ரீ [||\*] [கொ]விசைய நந்திவிக்கிரமபரும-
- 2 ம்ரு [யா]ண்டு பதினென்[ரு]வது மலர்ட்டுக் கு-
- 3 ஸுக்கைக்கூற்றத்துத் திருக்கொவலூர்த் தி-
- 4 ருவிரட்டானத்து மாதெவர்க்கு நந்தாவின-
- 5 க் கிரவு]ம் பகலு(ம்) மிரண்டு வினக் கொரிப்பத-
- 6 ம்[ரு விடெல்வி]டுகு இ[ளங்கொ]அதிஅரையனாதி
- 7 . . . . . விசுமபூதி மகள் விடெ-
- 8 . . . . . யின சாத்தன் மறவன் றெவி பூதி
- 9 . . . . . விடெல்விடுகு கல்வா[ல\*] நி-
- 10 . . . . . ன் னிறை நாற்பத்தெண் க-
- 11 . . . . . சை கழஞ்சின்வாய்த் திங்-
- 12 . . . . . ட்டுவதாக திருக்கொவலூர்
- 13 . . . த்தார் [கை]ய்(ை)வழி [வை\*]த்தது[||\*]

**No. 925.**

(A.R. No. 296 of 1902).

IN THE SAME PLACE.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ஸுஷி ஸ்ரீ [  *] [கொ]விசைய ந[ந்]-<br/>திவிக்-</li> <li>2 கிரமபருமற்கு யாண்டு பதி[னா]ரு-<br/>வது</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 தற்கு தெ[ன்னவ]னி .</li> <li>8 மற்[வம்] பூதி வைத்த<br/>விடெல்-</li> </ol> |
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**Monuments** – There are four monuments of interest in Kodumbalur, three are under the protection of ASI ([Archaeological Survey of India](http://www.archaeologicalsurveyofindia.gov.in)).







North-east view | Arvind Venkataraman

**Moovar Koil** – *Moovar Koil* in Tamil means “three temples” and the complex is named so very aptly. This temple complex consists of three separate shrines, standing in a line facing west, with their front *ardha-mandapas* connecting to a common *maha-mandapa*, followed by a *Nandi-mandapa*, *bali-pitha* and a *dhvaja-stambha*. There are also remains of fifteen or sixteen subsidiary shrines, all enclosed within an enclosure wall. There

were two entrances into the complex, one through west with a *gopura* on top and another in north-east opening into a circular stone well. Of the three temples, two have survived fully while only the base of the third remains. **No.**

**126.â□" ON THE SOUTH WALL OF THE MANDAPA IN FRONT OF THE CENTRAL SHRINE IN THE CHANDRASEKARA TEMPLE AT TIRUCHCHENDURAI[1]**

This inscription, dated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Parakesarivarman, registers a grant of land by Pudi Adittapidari to the stone temple built by her at Tiruchchendurai, to meet the cost of the expenses of a festival in connection with the solar eclipse. Pudi Adittapidari may have been a daughter of Pudi or Maravan Pudiyar referred to in another inscription of king Parakesarivarman at Tiruchchendurai[2]. The king Parakesarivarman himself has to be identified with either Madhu rantaka Uttama-Chola or Aditya Karikala II. both of whom held the title Parakesarivarman[3]. The provision made for festivals on the day of the solar eclipse might suggest that in this second year of king Parakesarivarman there should have been at least one such eclipse. If Parakesarivarman is identified with Madhurantaka Uttama-Chola who succeeded to the throne in A.D. 971, we find that according to Dr. Schramâ□™s â□œ*Eclipses of the Sun in India*,â□□ there were two solar eclipses in the year 972 which was the second year of Uttama-Chola. Consequently it is not unlikely that the king referred to in this inscription Uttama â□" Chola.

Hail ! Prosperity ! In the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of (*the reign of*) Parakesarivarman I, Pudi Adittapidari, gave with libation of water these two garden (*lands*) as per the same terms under which I purchased (*them*) (*viz.,*) the garden (*land*) which I purchased for 35 *kalanju* of gold in the second year (*of the kingâ□™s reign*) from Kachchuvan (Kasyapa) Tattanarayanan and the garden (*land*) purchased from Paradayan (*Bharadvaja* ?) Isana Maran, to the lord of the stone temple at Tiruchchendurai for maintaining festivals (*tiruvilappuram*) of the lord of Tiruchchendurai for maintaining festivals (*tiruvilappuram*) of the lord of Tiruchchendurai on (*the day of*) the solar eclipse, (*stipulating that*) the maintenance of the (*said*) festivals of the lord of (*this*) stone temple constructed by me Pudi Adittapidari (*should be met only*) from the produce of the (*said*) gardens. (*The assembly of*) all *Mahesvaras* shall protect this (*charity*)

**No. 127.- ON THE WEST WALL OF THE CENTRAL SHRINE IN THE GHRITASTHANESVARA TEMPLE AT TILLASTHANAM[4]**

This inscription is dated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Parakesarivarman and registers a gift of gold for a lamp by a certain Korran Arunmoli *alias* Vanavan Peraraiyan of Arrur in Mangadu-nadu. The money presented was apparently utilized in purchasing a land which adjoined another granted by Nangai Varaguna-Perumanar. This lady had been already referred to as the wife of Parantaka IlangoVelar and to have made a grant of land to the same temple in the 13<sup>th</sup> year of Rajakesarivarman (Gandaraditya). It is now difficult to determine who this king Parakesarivarman is in whose reign the gift of Varaguna-Perumanar could be referred to. Subsequent to Gandaraditya who ruled for about 18 years there must have ruled at least four kings before rajaraja I. succeeded to the throne in A.D. 985. viz., - Arimjaya, Sundara Chola Parantaka II., Aditya Karikala and Uttama-Chola of whom the first probably and the two last bore the surnames Parakesarivarman. Consequently



Parakesarivarman of our inscription must be identified with either Arimajaya whose records have not been found hitherto or with Uttama-Chola. In all probability the reference appears to be the latter.

Hail ! Prosperity ! In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of (*the reign of*) king Parakesarivarman, Korran Arunmoli *alias* Vanavan Peraraiyan a native of Arrur (*a village*) in [Ma]ngadu-nadu, gave [25 *kalanju*] of gold for burning one perpetual lamp day and night . . . . . at Tiruneyttanam. Having received this twenty-five *kalanju* of gold . . . . . .. quarter *sey* (*of land*) given for a lamp by Nangai Varaguna-Perumanar; the northern boundary (*is*) to the south of (*the channel called*) Andanurvaykkal and the western boundary (*is*) to the east of the mound which has never been leveled (*for cultivation*). We, the assembly, the villagers (*urom*) and the temple servants (*devakanmi*) of Tiruneyttanam sold to Koran Arunmoli *alias* Vanavan Peraraiyan (*the land*) situated within the four great boundaries thus described without excluding any (*portion*) of the land within (*unnilam*) and executed a sale-deed (*vilai-avanam*). (*The assembly of*) all *Mahesvaras* shall protect this (*charity*)

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[1] No. 319 of 1903.

[2] See *Madras Epigraphical Report* for 1908, page 88, paragraph 90.

[3] The Director-General's *Archaeological Survey Report* for 1904-05, page 122.

[4] No. 277 of 1911.

**No. 103.**

**(A. R. No. 174 of 1912).**

**Tiruvorriyur, Saidapet Taluk, Chingleput District.**

**On a slab built into the floor of the verandah**

**round the central shrine in the Adhipurisvara temple.**

This date of this record of Vijaya-Kampavarman is not clear. It might be 11, 13 or 16. The inscription records an agreement made by the assembly (*ur*) of Vaikkattur to provide offerings to the god Mahadeva at Tiruvorriyur, on the day of *sankranti*, for the interest on 27 *kalanju* of gold received by them from Pudi Arindigai, wife of Videlveidugu[Ilankove]lar of Kodumbalur[1] in Ko-nadu. The chiefs of Kodumbalur (in the Pudukkottai state) figure largely in inscriptions as subordinates of the Cholas, but their connection with the Pallavas is not so well known. A chief of this family is also mentioned in a mutilated record from Kilur[2], dated in the 11th year of Vijaya-Nandivikramavarman, where the donor is stated to be the wife of Sattan maravan and the daughter of Vikrama-Pudi who is probably identical with Videlveidugu Ilanko-Adiaraiyan mentioned in the same record.



Central shrine | Arvind Venkataraman

Local traditions and folklores give some interesting interpretations for the term '*Moovar*'. As per one belief, three Shaiva saints (nayanars) Appar, Sundarar and Manikkavachakar built one shrine each. Another belief states that kings of three major dynasties Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas constructed one shrine each. Another tradition states that these three shrines were constructed to house Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. The foundation inscription clears all doubts, stating that these temples were constructed by the Irukkuvel chief Bhooti Vikramakesari on behalf of himself and his two wives, Karrali and Varaguna.





View

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No. 560.

(A.R. No. 258 of 1903).

ON THE SAME WALL,

- 1 ஸ்ரீமதி ஸ்ரீ[...]\* கொராஜகெ[...]
- 2 உயிள-ழாலது திருப்பராத்தழைப் பெருமானடி-
- 3 கனகக்குச் செம்பிய[...]
- 4 ஸ்ரீமதி ஸ்ரீ[...]\* கொராஜகெ[...]
- 5 ஸ்ரீமதி ஸ்ரீ[...]\* கொராஜகெ[...]
- 6 மாரையலல் அ[...]
- 7 ஸ்ரீமதி ஸ்ரீ[...]\* கொராஜகெ[...]

(A. R. No. 273 of 1903).

ON THE SOUTH BASE OF THE SAME MANDAPA.

- 1 ஸ்ரீமதி ஸ்ரீ[...]\* கொராஜகெ[...]
- 2 திருப்பராயத்து[...]

ON THE SAME WALL.

- 1 ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ [||\*] கொ[||\*]ப்பரகேசரிபர்ம[||\*]க்கு யாண்டு க்-
- 2 ஆவது ஈசானமங்கலத்து பருடையொம் திரு[||\*]செந்து-
- 3 ஹை கற்றனிபெருமா(ன்)னடிக(ள்)ளுக்கு விளாக[வறை] நெல்வி-
- 4 ஹைகின்ற பாததிக்கு யிசைத்த எல்லை மறவன் வாய்க்கா-

No. 630.

ON THE SOUTH BASE OF THE SAME MANDAPA.

- 1 ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ [||\*] கொ[||\*]ப்பரகேசரிபன்ம[||\*]க்கு யாண்டு நவது பிரமதெயம் ஈசானமங்கல  
த்து பருடையொம் இவர் திருச்செந்து
- 2 ம[||\*] கற்றனிய் பெருமானடிகளுக்கு தெவதானமாக எங்கள் பருடை நிலத்தை  
நிரொடு அட்டி கு[||\*]த்த நிலத்து[||\*]கு இசெத்த எல்லை மெக்கினுக்கு எல்லைய்  
அமண்குடி ஊர் எ[||\*]
- 3 கிழைதெருவினுக்கு கிழக்கும் கிழக்கினுக்கு எல்லைய் பாரதாயன் நக்கன் சாத்த னுள்ள  
ட்டாரும் பாதகாரி மருதஞ் செந்தனும் ஆவெணி நாராயண நாராயணனும் ஆவெணி  
[||\*]
- 4 வத்துக்கு மெ[||\*]க்கும் வடக்கினுக்கு எல்லைய் காச்சுவன் கண நக்கன னைபிச்சு
- 5 ட்டார் நிலத்துக்கு தெற்கும் தெற்கினுக்கு எல்லைய் மறவன்வாய்க்கு வடக்கும் இவ்வி-  
[||\*]சத்த பன்னான்கெல்லையுள் அகப்பட்ட பருடைநிலம்

No. 640.

ON THE SOUTH BASE OF THE SAME MANDAPA.

- 1 ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ [||\*] கொ[||\*]ப்பரகேசரிபன்ம[||\*]க்கு யாண்டு ய[||\*]-ஆவது மறவன்வாய்க்கு  
துப் பெருமானடிகள் தெவதானத்துப் ப[||\*]ணிசெய் மக்களுக்கும் சென்னடைக்கும்  
நிலந்த[||\*] [||\*]டைத்த நிலநிகி நின்ற
- 2 நிலம் ஆரத்திடையான் கொயில் மெலைத்தெற்றி நறுவிவி வயகித்து காவெய் காணி  
ஆரத்திடையான் கொயிலின் கி[||\*]ழீத்தொண்டி எழுமாவரை திருப்பள்ளித்தா-  
மந் தொடுப்பார் நில-
- 3 த்தின்மிகை கொயிலநிலம் நின்ற நிலம் அரைக்கால் வடவாய்நத்தத்தில் கொயில் நிலம்  
மாகாணி மறவன்வாயின் கிழைப் பெருஞ்சாத்தன்வயக்கல் முக்காணி தென்வாய்  
நத்தத்துக் கொயிலநிலம் மாகாணி மெழுக்கடிக[||\*]
- 4 மார் நிலத்தின் தென்வாய் னுளங்கரையின் கிழைநிலம் மாகாணி அமரா[||\*]தி மங்கலத்-  
துப் பொதுவான நிலம் ஒன்றெ யிரண்டுமா குறள்புளிக்கானதுடவை ஒரு மாவரை  
பணப்பந்-
- 5 துறையின் மெலைநிலம் அரைக்கால் கழுமலத்து வாகைச்செய்யின் [||\*]ன்வாய்நிலம்  
இரண்டுமா மறவன்வாயில் முக்காணி வழியும் முக்காணி கொயில்ப் பணிசெய்  
மக்கள் நிலத்தில் அரைக்கால்[||\*]

<sup>1</sup> The record contains many mistakes in spelling.

<sup>2</sup> The inscription probably ends here.



No. 641.

(A.R. No. 332 of 1903).

ON THE SAME WALL.

- 1 ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ [||\*] கொப்பரகெஸரிவ-  
[ன்\*] [||\*]-
- 2 க்ரு யாண்டு யெ-ஆவது தென்க-  
கெ-
- 3 த் தெவதான வுஜுடெயம் அ[றி]-  
ஞ்-

- 4 சிகெச்சதுஜெ-ஓமங்கலத்து
- 5 திருமறவ[ன்] ஈஜூரத்து பெருமா-
- 6 னடிகள் தெவதான[ம்\*] பரமேஸ்வ-
- 7 ர வாய்க்கா[வ]கரு [மெ] [||\*] கரு-  
[ம்] இ-

No. 642.

A.R No. 333 of 1903).

ON THE SAME WALL.

- 1 ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ [||\*] ராஜ[ரய]ராஜதெவற்கு யாண்டு
- 2 எ-வது உடையார் திருமறவனீஸ்ரமுடை-
- 3 யார் திருமுன்பெ எரிக்ககடவொமாக இக்கொயிற் கா[ணி]-
- 4 உடைப சிவவராஜணரொம் இவ்ஜூரி விருக்கும் [வி]-
- 5 யாபாரி மறவநெரிஉடையார் ஒவந் கொவாண்டாந்-
- 6 பாடு கொண்ட கா[சு] நயந இக்காசு முப்பத்துமுன்று-
- 7 ன் கொண்டு இத்தெவர திருமுன்பெ சந்திராதித்தவ-
- 8 த் குடங் கொ[ண்\*]டு படிக்கடந்து புக்காரெ உழக்கு பசு[ந]-
- 9 ய்யால் ஒரு திருதுந்தா ன்ளக் கெரிப்பதா[க சம்]மதித்-

288

No. 560.

(A.R. No. 258 of 1903).

ON THE SAME WALL.

- 1 ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ [||\*] கொராஜகெ[ஸ]ரிவஜே-ஓரு யாண்டு
- 2 உயெ-ழாவது திருப்பராத் துறைப் பெருமானடி-
- 3 களுக்குச் செம்பிய[னெ]வரையரா[ன] பாழி நக்நன் குடுத்த [
- 4 ள்ளக்குழித்தட்டி [இர]ண்டு தென்னவன் இளங்கொவெ-
- 5 ளார்அயின மற[வன்] புதி யார் சூரலூர்க்கு-றறத்து க க-
- 6 ழாராவயல் அ[ணி]லுக்குடுத்த நிலம் உளளலவ்ள தெ-
- 7 ன்வாய் ஊர்க்காலில் முன்று மாவும் ஊர்க்காலில் மாகாணியு[ம்]



No. 646.

(A.R. No. 337 of 1903).

ON THE SAME BASE.

- 1 ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ கொப்பரகெஸரிவதற்கு யாண்டு மெ-வது தென்கரை தெவதான ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ  
தெய மறிஞ்சியச்சதுஷ்டிமங்கல[த்]து மறவணிசரத்து பெருமானடிகளுக்கு இவ்-  
வூர் பெரு-
- 2 க்குறி ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ செம்பியன் இருசுவேளாராந பூதி பராந்தகனார் தெவியாராந  
சொழி[த்]பெருந்தெவியாராந பெ[ரு]மனங்கை திருப்பிறந்த நாள் ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ

**No. 10—KILUR INSCRIPTION OF NANDIVARMAN, YEAR 16**

K. G. KRISHNAN, OOTACAMUND

The inscription<sup>1</sup> edited here is engraved on a rock in the *prākāra* of the *Vīraṭṭāṇēśvara* temple at **Kilūr**, Tirukkōvilūr Taluk, South Arcot District. The text of the record has been published in the *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. VII, No. 925. **Palaeographically** the inscription may be attributed to the **ninth century A. D.** The **script** as well as the **language** of the record is Tamil. The inscription is dated in the **sixteenth year of the reign of Kō-Vijaiya-Nandivikramaparuman** and records a gift by **Maṇavam<sup>2</sup> Pūdi alias Tennavaṇ Ilaṅgōvēlār**. The gift consisted of twentyfour *kaḷaṇḷu* of pure gold weighed by *Vidēlvadugu*, the standard stone, out of the interest of which the *Nagarattār* of Tirukkōvalūr undertook to supply ghee for burning a lamp day and night in front of *Mādēva* of Tiruvīraṭṭāṇam at Tirukkōvalūr.

The record is important in that it proves the contemporaneity of **Bhūti Vikramakēśari**, the earliest well-known Koḍumbālūr chief, with the Pallava king Nandivarman (III). The genealogy of the family of the **Irukkuvēlār**, to which this chief belonged, has been thoroughly discussed by Shri K. V. Subrahmanya Iyer and Shri K. S. Vaidyanathan.<sup>3</sup>

The name of the donor in this record consists of two words, viz. *Maṇavaṇ* and *Pūdi*. While the former stands for his father's name, the latter is his own name and is only a Tamil variant for Sanskrit *Bhūti*.<sup>4</sup> It is known from the Mūvarkōyil inscription<sup>5</sup> of Bhūti Vikramakēśari that **Vikramakēśari** was a title earned by him for his success in battle against the Pallava king as well as *Vīra-pāṇḍya* and *Vaṇḍi Vēl* (i.e. the Chēra king). **Maṇavaṇ Pūdi alias Tennavaṇ Ilaṅgōvēlār** figures in a number of inscriptions of Rājakēśarivarman who has been identified with Aditya I. Of these, a record<sup>6</sup> from Tiruppalātturai, dated in the 27th regnal year of a Rājakēśarivarman, mentions one **Tennavaṇ Ilaṅgōvēlār alias Maṇavaṇ Pūdiyār**. **Karṇali**, the wife of **Tennavaṇ Ilaṅgōvēlār alias Maṇavaṇ Pūdi** who is the same as the donor of the present record, figures as the donatrix in another inscription<sup>7</sup> from Tiruppalātturai. It is not unlikely that the same **Karṇali** is spoken of as one of the wives of Bhūti Vikramakēśari in his Mūvarkōyil record. *Varaguṇā*, his other wife, may be identified with the homonymous lady mentioned as the wife of **Tennavaṇ Ilaṅgōvēlār** in another inscription<sup>8</sup> of Rājakēśarivarman. **Bhūti Parāntakaṇ**, a son of this chief according to the Mūvarkōyil inscription, built a stone temple for the god at Andanallūr in the

earliest for Bhūti Vikramakēśari. Another epigraph, dated in the 3rd year of Parakēśarivarman identified with Parāntaka I and referring to Pūdi Āditta Piḍāri, the queen of Ariḱulakēśari and the daughter of Teṇṇavaṇ Iḷaṅgōvēlār, seems to provide the latest reference to this chief. The range of the period covered by these inscriptions, which is less than fifty years, does not allow us to suggest the existence of different chiefs bearing the same title *Teṇṇavaṇ Iḷaṅgōvēlār*. Moreover every member of this family adopted a different title in order to distinguish himself from the others<sup>1</sup> and Maṇavaṇ Pūdi was the only chief with the title *Teṇṇavaṇ Iḷaṅgōvēlār*. In view of the identification of his Pallava overlord mentioned in the present record with Nandivarman III, Bhūti Vikramakēśari's claim to have defeated a Pallava king's army (cf. *Pallavasya dhvajinīyāḥ*)<sup>2</sup> on the banks of the Kāvēri deserves to be studied in the context of Parāntaka's claim to have conquered the Pallavas.<sup>3</sup>

The association of Tirukkōvilūr, the findspot of the present record, with one of the forebears of the Vēlirs of Kodumbālūr is clearly referred to in some of the verses in the Saṅgam literature.<sup>4</sup> Malaiyamāṇ Tirumuḍikkāri, a chief of this region, was famous for his philanthropy. Very interesting is the statement<sup>5</sup> that the three kings (i.e. the Chēra, Chōla and Pāṇḍya) vied with each other in enlisting the support of this chief. We have already seen how the Koḍumbālūr family was wooed and ultimately admitted into the circle (*varga*) of the Chōlas. The common patronage bestowed upon Vikkiyaṇṇaṇ, probably a Vēlir chieftain, by both the Chēra Sthāṇu Ravi and the Chōla Āditya I furnishes a clear contemporary evidence<sup>6</sup> of the unique position enjoyed by the Vēlirs in the Tamil country.

TEXT<sup>7</sup>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 Svasti Śrī [  *] K[ō]-Vijaiya-Na[n]divik-          | 8 <u>Maṇavam Pūdi vaitta . . .<sup>1</sup>viḍēl-</u> |
| 2 kiramaparumaṅku yā ḍu padi[nā]rāvadu               | 9 viḍugu tīp-pōkku-ch[chempon]                       |
| 3 Malāṭṭu-Kkuṟukkai-kkūṟṟattu=Tti-                   | 10 irupattu-nār-kaḷaṇju ni . . <sup>2</sup>          |
| 4 rukkōvalūr-Tti . . . . . <sup>8</sup> ṇat-         | 11 idaṇ paḷisai kaḷaṇjir pērtt-idu <sup>3</sup> -    |
| 5 tu Mādē[va]rk . . . . . la . . . . <sup>9</sup>    | 12 ḷ uriy ney aṭṭuvadāga Tirukkōva-                  |
| 6 iravum pagalu . . . . . <sup>10</sup>              | 13 lūr-[na]garattār kaivali vaiytta-                 |
| 7 daṅku <u>Teṇṇavaṇ-Iḷaṅ</u> . . . . . <sup>11</sup> | 14 du [  *]  |

<sup>1</sup> *QJMS*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 94 and table.



fourteenth regnal year of Parakēsarivarman<sup>1</sup> and gave land as *kāṇikkadamai* five years later<sup>2</sup> to Araiyaṇ Vira-śōḷaṇ who in his turn gave it back to the *ūrār* of Andavanallūr after a period of six years.<sup>3</sup> The date of this last transaction is the twentyfifth year of Parakēsarivarman's reign, which is too high for any king bearing the said title and ruling in the period in question except Parāntaka I. It follows that Bhūti Vikramakēsari, the father of Bhūti Parāntaka, was a contemporary of Āditya I. It will thus be seen that Maṛavaṇ Pūdi is the same as Bhūti Vikramakēsari who was the husband of Kaṇṇaḷi and Varaguṇā and was a contemporary of both Nandivarman and Āditya I.

The donor's relationship with the Chōḷas may be examined here. His mother Anupamā was a Chōḷa princess according to the Mūvarkōyil inscription. One Pūdi Mādēvaḍigaḷ<sup>4</sup> is mentioned as the queen of Kaṇṇaradēva who may be identified with the homonymous son<sup>5</sup> of Āditya I, as she figures as the donatrix in an inscription<sup>6</sup> dated in the 6th year of Maduraikoṇḍa Parakēsarivarman, i.e. Parāntaka I. This Pūdi Mādēvaḍigaḷ was probably a sister of Maṛavaṇ Pūdi.<sup>7</sup> A record<sup>8</sup> dated in the third year of the reign of Parāntaka I mentions Pūdi Āditta Piḍāri, the wife of Prince Arikulākēsari and the daughter of Teṇṇavaṇ Iḷaṅgōvēḷār. Thus Bhūti Vikramakēsari seems to be allied to the Chōḷa family through his female relatives, viz. his mother Anupamā, sister Pūdi Mādēvaḍigaḷ, and daughter Pūdi Āditta Piḍāri. It is interesting to note that within a few years from the date of the present record, the Chōḷa kings succeeded in weaning away the allegiance of the family ultimately from the Pallava side.

Maṛavaṇ Pūdi *alias* Bhūti Vikramakēsari claims, in his Mūvarkōyil inscription, to have fought against Vira-pāṇḍya who has been identified with *Chōḷan-talai-koṇḍa* Vira-pāṇḍya, the adversary of Sundara-chōḷa and Āditya II. It may be noted here that Vira-pāṇḍya was a junior contemporary of Rājasimha, the opponent of Parāntaka I. In one of Rājasimha's inscriptions,<sup>9</sup> a servant of Vira-pāṇḍya is referred to and hence it may be presumed that Vira-pāṇḍya continued the feud between the Chōḷas and the Pāṇḍyas after Rājasimha's flight to Ceylon. Therefore it is possible to surmise that Bhūti Vikramakēsari encountered Vira-pāṇḍya during the reign of Parāntaka I. This may very well explain the vigour with which Āditya II fought and ultimately killed Vira-pāṇḍya who was perhaps a continued source of trouble for the Chōḷas from the days of Parāntaka I.

The Pallava king mentioned in the record under study may be identified with the last king of that name, viz. Nandivarman III. Of all the inscriptions referring to Maṛavaṇ Pūdi, only the present record belongs to the reign of Nandivarman III and therefore its date may be taken as the

<sup>1</sup> *SII*, Vol. III, No. 139. Parakēsarivarman of this record is Parāntaka I and not Uttama-chōḷa as is shown below.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, No. 668. The inscription refers to the nineteenth regnal year of Parakēsarivarman. It may be noted that the transactions recorded in the inscriptions referred to in this and the next foot-note conclusively prove the identity of the kings mentioned in them as well as the date of Bhūti Vikramakēsari.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 669.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 665.

<sup>5</sup> Above, Vol. XXVI, p. 233 and n. 6.

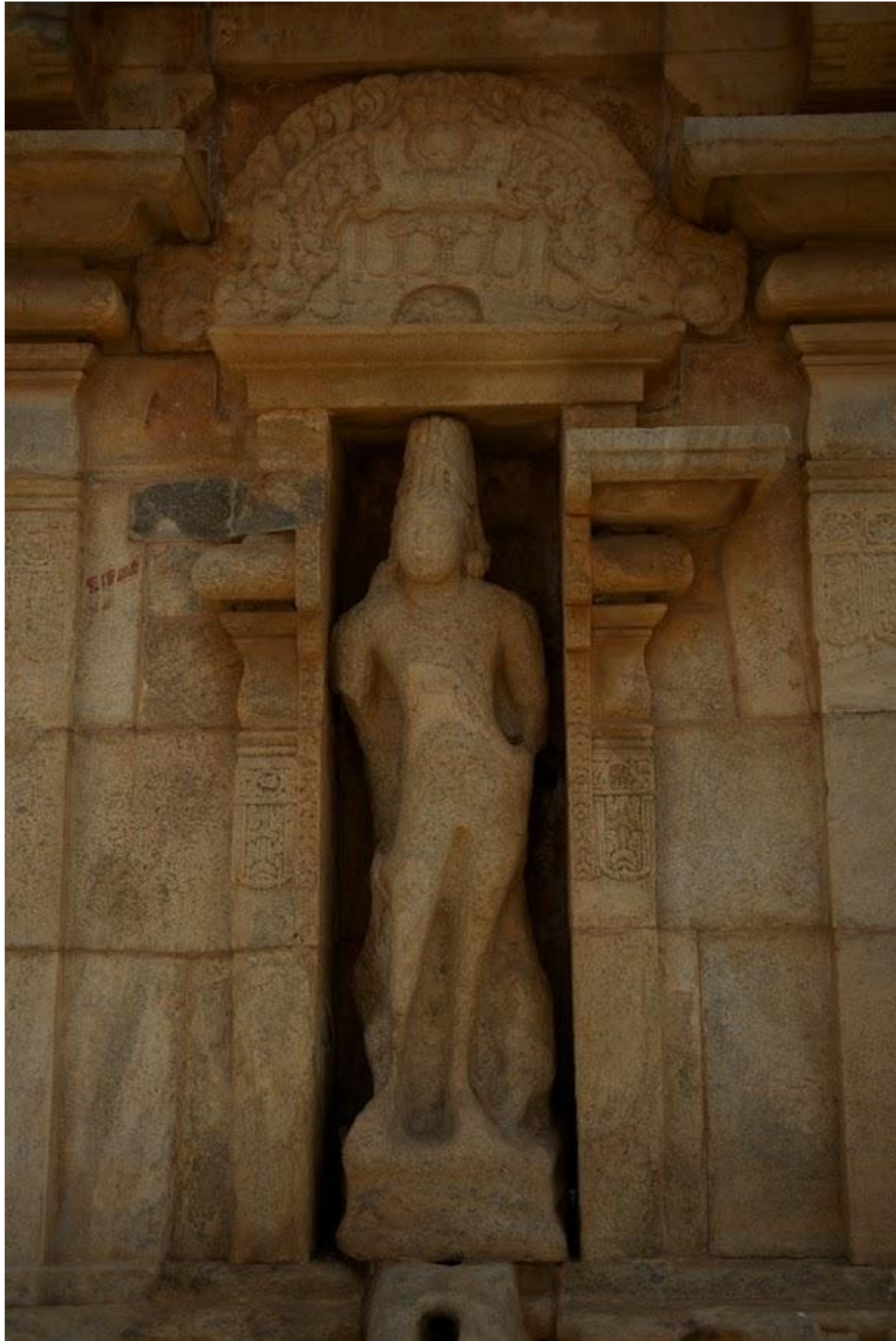
<sup>6</sup> *SII*, Vol. VIII, No. 634. She is first referred to (without her name being mentioned) in a record (*ibid.*, Vol. XIII, No. 321) dated in the 27th year of a Rājākēsarivarman who has been identified with Āditya I. Another inscription (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII, No. 554) in which she figures as a donatrix is dated in the 23rd year of a Parakēsarivarman who is no doubt Parāntaka I as the regnal year is too high for any other Parakēsari of this period.

<sup>7</sup> A similar example of both a brother and a sister bearing the same name may be found in Pūdi Āditta Piḍāri and Pūdi Āditta Piḍāraṇ, daughter and son respectively of Bhūti Vikramakēsari (*QJMS*, Vol. XLIII, p. 94).

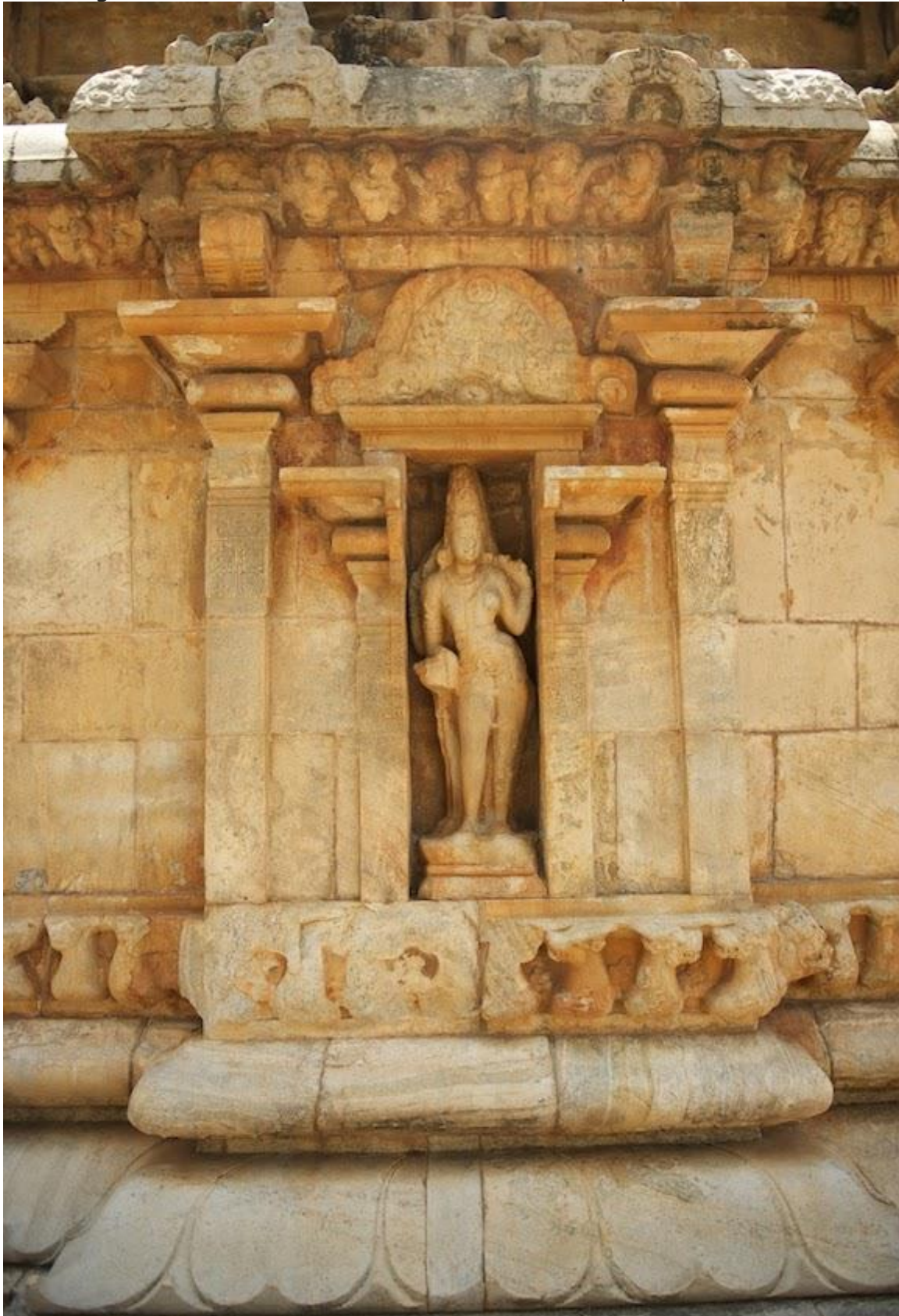
<sup>8</sup> *SII*, Vol. III, No. 96. This lady is first mentioned in an earlier record (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII, No. 629), dated in the 23rd year of a Rājākēsarivarman who may be identified with Āditya I on account of the high regnal year and the palacography of the inscription.

<sup>9</sup> Above, Vol. XXVIII, p. 87; *QJMS*, Vol. XLIII, p. 87.





Standing Shiva or Shiva-Bhikshatana | Arvind Venkataraman







Ardhanarishvara | Arvind Venkataraman

Both the temples are very similar in architecture, style and approach except their sculptural decoration. The *adhishtana* is built over an *upana* and composed of a *jagati* decorated with lotus petals, *vrta-kumuda*, *kantha* overimposed with *vyalas* distributed over its length with *makaras* on the corners and finally a reduced *pattika* and *prati*. Barrett<sup>10</sup> takes this *adhishtana* decoration as an original early Chola form while Soundara Rajan states that this is the earliest example of *padmapushkala* *adhishtana*. A *padmapushkala* *adhishtana* contains elements of *padmabandha* and *vaprabandha* *adhishtana*. The lotus decoration over *jagati* comes from *padmabandha* and the *vrta-kumuda* capped within *urdhva-padma* and *adhah-padma* clasps come from *vaprabandha*. The *vimana* is *tri-ratha* in plan, with three niches on each



side except in the west. The niches are compartmentalized within two pilasters, the central or *bhadra* niche is broader than the corner or *karna* niches. In the central shrine, *bhadra* niche is decorated with an elaborate *makara-torana* resting over its side pilasters. In the *bhadra* niche are found *Ardhanarishvara* in the east, Shiva-Bhikshatana in the north and niche in the south is empty.



Seated Shiva in North | Arvind Venkataraman









Shiva

as Dakshinamurti in the south | Arvind Venkataraman

The *shikhara* is *dvi-tala* (two tier) and rests above the walls, separated by a cornice moulding. Below the cornice is a regular *bhuta* or *gana* frieze shown playing various musical instruments. Above the cornice runs a *vyala* frieze. The first floor has an arrangement of *kuta-sala-kuta*, *sala* in middle with *kutas* at the corners. Niches on the *sala* shrine are decorated with an image. In the north is found Shiva (Barrett identifies him with Vishnu), in the east is placed Shiva



seated with Uma, in the south is found Dakshinamurti, while the niche in the west is empty.



Shiva seated with one of his hand over a linga in the north | Arvind Venkataraman





Shiva seated with Uma in the west | Arvind Venkataraman





Dakshinamurti in the south | Arvind Venkataraman





Indra over an elephant in the east | Arvind Venkataraman

The second floor (*tala*) is bereft of the *kuta-sala-kuta* arrangement. The *sala* of the first *tala* is extended to this floor covering the central portion of each side. *Apsaras* or damsels are adorning the *karna* niche on this *tala*. A square *griva* rises above this *tala* supporting a square cupola above. Large *kudu* arches are provided in the middle of all sides. Nandis are placed at the corners. In the *griva* niches are found, Shiva with Uma in the west, Shiva seated with one his hand resting over a *linga* in the north, Indra riding over an

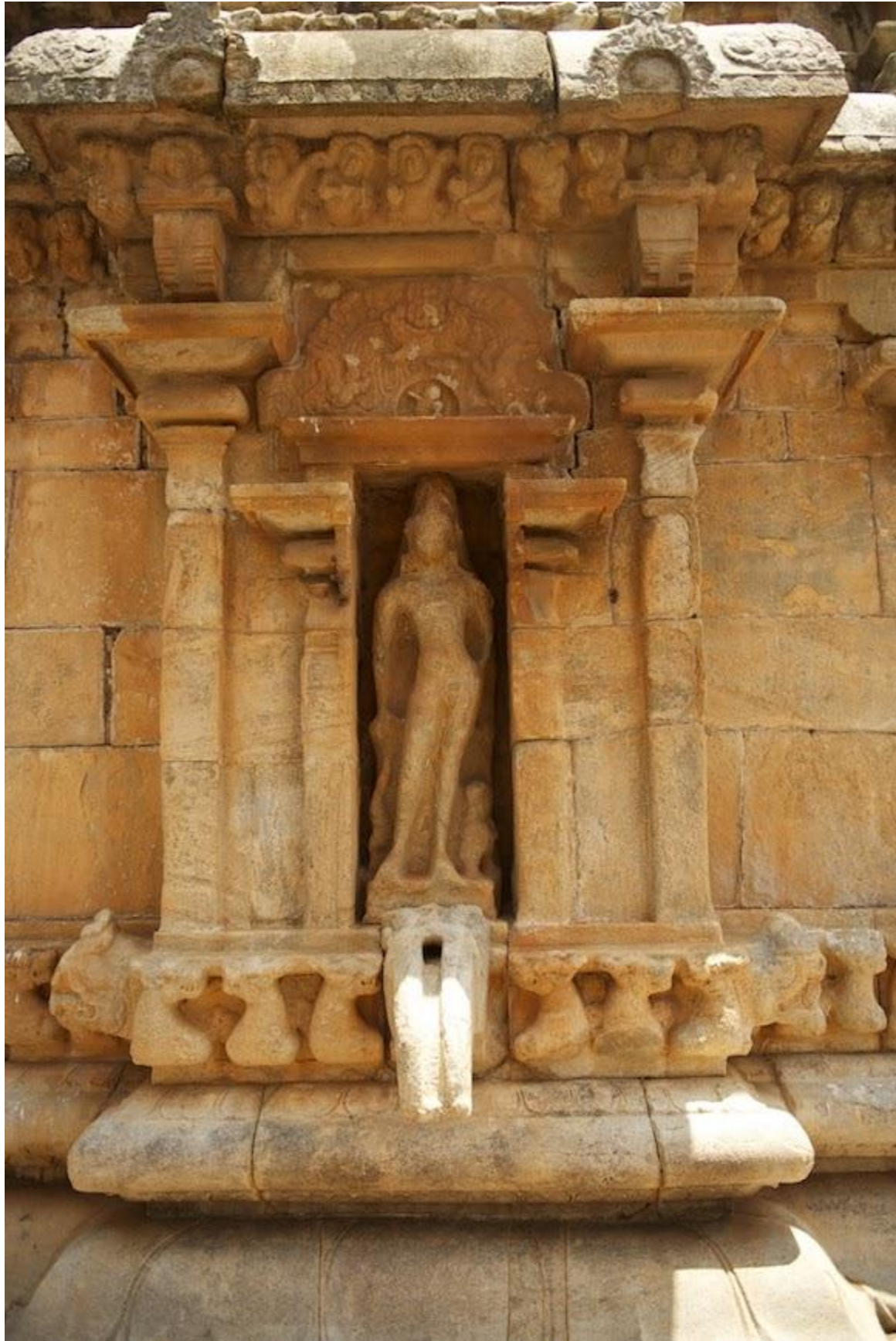


elephant in the east and Dakshinamurti in the south. Over the square cupola is topped with a *kalasa*, *stupa* and other elements.



Southern shrine | Arvind Venkataraman







Bhikshatana in the north | Arvind Venkataraman



Gangadhara in the east | Arvind Venkataraman

Shiva as  
Venkataraman



Vinadhara Shiva



in the south | Arvind Venkataraman



Harihara in the west | Arvind Venkataraman







Shiva with Parvati in the north | Arvind Venkataraman



Kalari in the east | Arvind Venkataraman







Natesha in the south | Arvind Venkataraman

The iconographic theme of the southern shrine is much elaborate and richer in comparison to the central shrine. Among the icons placed in *bhadra* niches, in the north is found Shiva as Bhikshatana, in the east is placed Shiva as Gangadhara and in the south is found Shiva holding a *vina* (Vinadhara Dakshinamurti?). Icons on the first tier are Harihara in the west, standing Shiva with Parvati in the north, Kalari in the east and Natesha in the south. The sculpture of Kalari, Shiva annihilating Yama (Kala), is definitely one of the best art specimen of the Irukkuvel period. Shiva is shown dancing in a destructive posture standing over a lying figure of Yama. Though shown in a fierce attitude, a faint smile over Shiva's face makes the overall theme very amiable and pleasant.



Shiva  
with Parvati in the north | Arvind Venkataraman









Gajasamharamurti in the south | Arvind Venkataraman

Niches over *griva* also have some interesting icons. Niche in the west is empty, in the north is placed Shiva standing with Parvati, in the east is found *Tripurantaka* and in the south is Shiva as *Gajasamharamurti* where he is shown tearing apart the skin of an elephant. Depicted with four hands he carries a snake in one of his hands while another hand is in *suchi mudra* pointing downwards. The image of *Tripurantaka* is considered among the best specimens of the Irukkuvel period. Here, Shiva is shown holding a bow and taking a dancing posture, identified as *kodukotti* by R. Nagaswami<sup>10</sup>. He tells that this dance was performed immediately after the destruction of the Tripurasuras.

Tripurantaka from Kodumbalur, now in Madras Museum | AIIS

We have already discussed the dating of Bhuti Vikramakesari and associated controversies. These also apply when we try to date this temple. Barrett<sup>12</sup> appears to be in double thoughts when he dates the temple within a

decade either side of 960 CE, asserting that there is nothing in the architecture of the temple which demands a date early in the second half of the tenth century CE. The base, elevation and detail remain firmly rooted in the style of the First Phase, to which, indeed, the temple complex has sometimes been attributed. He says that the temple seems to be the sole representative of the Second Phase on the southern border of the *Cholamandalam*. Gary J Schwindler<sup>13</sup> disagrees with Barrett in latter's placement of *Moovar Koil* to the second phase explaining that the temple fits stylistically more comfortably in the First Phase. Soundara Rajan takes this temple as clearest statement of the Konadu idiom preserved and places it between 878 and 886 CE. He also identifies this temple with the *Tiruppudishvara* temple mentioned in the foundation inscription of *Muchukundeshvara* Temple on the basis that the founder of the *Moovar Koil* was *Maravan Pudi* giving his name to the temple. M A Dhaky<sup>14</sup> takes that this monument was constructed soon after the famous war of *Tirupurambium*, around 880 CE. It is now generally believed that king Bhuti Vikramakesari was a contemporary of the Chola king Aditya I (870-907 CE) and he would have constructed these temples during the last decades of the ninth century CE. Tripurasundari from Kodumbalur, now in Madras Museum | AIIS

We understand the risks associating art and style to a dynasty. Region may offer a better classification rather than dynasties. However, as there are many past studies basing classifications on dynasties, it would not be out of space to have a look into those here. Kodumbalur being situated in the traditional Chola land, its art and temples are considered as part of the larger Chola idiom during its early phase. Early stages of any style are generally evaluated for the influences on it from the nearby regions and its predecessors. Similarly, various theories are proposed for the foreign influence over the temple style and architecture during the early Chola period. The most discussed proposition is that there is a significant and considerable influence coming from the Pallavas and Chalukyas, as many of their temples are pre-dated before the start of the Chola dynasty. Bhoothalingam<sup>15</sup> writes, "*Experts declare that they are Chola temples and details confirm this, yet none can fail to be struck by their Pallava grace. The style and the moulding of the sculpture have the same quality of distinguished restraint which gave them the distinctive Pallava air of austere charm. How did the Kodumbalur Chola temples happen to get this touch when it is clear that the chieftains of Kodumbalur were such staunch allies and lieutenants of the Cola sovereigns?*"

Another proposal is of Pandyan influence of which Soundara Rajan is the main proponent. His argument is based upon the construction material. While many of the Pallava and Chalukya structural temples are constructed not in granite stone, therefore the Cholas would have got inspiration of using granite from somewhere else, and that is from the Pandyas. Barrett appears to agree with the Pandyan influence however he has different arguments for the same. Rama Sivaram<sup>16</sup> opines that the search for Chola style must begin somewhere within



the Mutharaiyar territories as the making of the Chola architecture began with Vijayalaya's conquest of Thanjavur from the Mutharaiyars.

**Inscriptions** – Few inscriptions discovered in the temple complex are listed below:

1. *On the south wall of the central shrine of Moovar koil*<sup>17</sup> – Sanskrit language, Pallava-grantha characters – mentions Bhuti alias Vikramakesari built three shrines in his name and in the names of his two wives, Karrali and Varaguna and consecrated Mahadeva. He also donated a matha and eleven villages to Mallikarjuna of Mathura (Madura?) for the offerings to the god and feeding of fifty Asitvatkara (kalamukha) ascetics. Mallikarjuna was born in Atreya-gotra and disciple of Vidyarasi. Genealogy of Bhuti, said to be born in Yadu-vamsa as Minnamala, is provided – Paravirajit, Viratunga, Ativira, Sangakrit, Nripakesari, Paradurgamardhana, Samarabhira. His grandfather Paradurgamardhana is said to have conquered Vatapi. His father Samarabhira is told to have killed Chalukki in the battle of Adhirajamangala. Bhuti's mother, Anupama, was a Chola princess. Bhuti fought against the Pallava armies and conquered Vira-Pandya in the battle and killed Vanchivel. Bhuti, from his wife Karrali, begot Parantaka and Adityavarman.
2. *On the north wall of the central shrine of the Moovar koil*<sup>18</sup> – refers to certain regnal year of the Chola king Rajendra I – mentions various victories conferred upon the king, also mentions the temple at Kodumbalur in Urattur-kurram of Konadu in Keralantaka valanadu.





Aivar Koil

**Aivar Koil (Aintali)** – *Aivar Koil* in Tamil means 'five temples', named aptly it being a quincunx (*panchayatana*) complex comprising of five shrines, one placed in the center and one each at corners. Only the base of the structure has survived suggesting that its walls and *shikhara* was probably constructed in brick and stucco as the opinion of K V Soundara Rajan. The complex faces east. *Adhithana* of the central shrine is of *padabandha* type, resting over an *upana* and composed on a *jagati*, *tripatta-kumuda*, *kantha* sandwiched between two *kampa* courses, a *pattika* and a *prati*. The central shrine was of *sandhara* type, provided with a circumambulation path around its sanctum. All the five shrines were found having a *Shivalinga* inside. The temple was extended with an *ardha-mandapa* and a *maha-mandapa* in later periods. Both were provided with a flight of steps for entrances, *ardha-mandapa* with two entrances, one on north and one in south, and *maha-mandapa* with an entrance on the west.





A *Nandi-mandapa* was added to the complex later. An image of *Nandi* is still there in this *mandapa*. In the excavations are found an image of four-armed *Durga*, an image of four-armed *Vishnu* and six images of *dvarapalas*. Soundara Rajan dates the temple to the first quarter of ninth-century CE, the period of Cattan (Sattan) Maravan, father of Bhuti Vikramakesari. He suggests that Aivar Koil is perhaps the first important monument of the Irukkuvels at their capital belonging to a time when they had direct matrimonial ties with the Mutharaiyars. He also draws similarities of this temple with that of Sundaravarada temple at Uttiramerur built during the Pallava king Dantivarman (795-846 CE). The Brahma image in the Chicago Art Institute is probably from this temple site.

**Inscriptions** – Various inscriptions found in the temple complex are provided below:

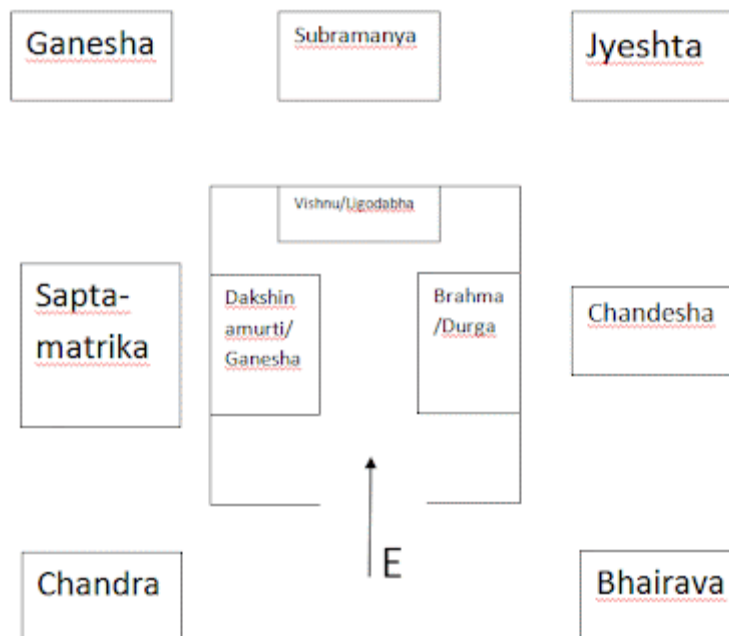
1. *On the east tier of the mandapa of Aivar temple*<sup>19</sup> – refers to the sixth regnal year of the Chola king Parakesarivarman – records a gift of a perpetual lamp by a certain individual for the welfare of his wife, in the temple of Tiru Aindali-Mahadeva at Kodumbalur in Urattur-kurram.
2. *At the same place*<sup>20</sup> – refers to the fifteenth regnal year of the Chola king Rajakesarivarman – the available portion only provides a name of a lady, Nangayar Anantan Paliyili of Urattur-kurram. Soundara Rajan suggest that this Rajakesarivarman might be identified with the Chola king **Aditya I (870-907 CE)**. He opines that the lady Nangayar Anantan Paliyili would be same as Paliyili Siriyanangai, wife of Mallan Anantan and daughter of Sattan Paliyili of Narthamalai inscription of Paliyilisvaram cave temple.
3. *On the south tier of the same mandapa*<sup>21</sup> – refers to the eighteenth regnal year of the Chola king Rajakesarivarman – registers a gift for a perpetual lamp by a certain individual, in the temple of Tiru Aindali Mahadeva at Kodumbalur.
4. *On a stone built into the pond in front of the Muchukundesvara temple*<sup>22</sup> – Sanskrit language, much damaged, seems to be a genealogy, name of Atri can be recognized
5. *On the three stones built into the same pond*<sup>23</sup> – Kannada language, ancient characters – fragmentary inscription mentions Kodumbalur and kesarisvara
6. *On the south tier of the mandapa of the Aivar temple*<sup>24</sup> – refers to fourteenth regnal year of the Chola king Rajaraja I, corresponding 999 CE – refers to a donation for a perpetual lamp by a certain individual





## Muchukundesvara Temple

**Muchkundesvara Temple** – The temple faces east and consists of a *garbha-grha*, *ardha-mandapa*, a closed *maha-mandapa* and an open pillared *mandapa*, the last two are later additions. The open pillared *mandapa* was built with materials taken from other ruined temples as its built in a haphazard manner. The temple stands within a complex, on corner of which were constructed four temples, all facing the central temple. One shrine is empty while other three have images, an image of Kartikeya, Chandeshvara and a later image of Bhairava.



Arrangement of sub-shrines in a parivara type temple





### Southern facade of the vimana

The *vimana* is a *tri-tala* (three tiers) shrine with its first *tala* in *tri-ratha* style. *Adhishthana* is built over an *upana* and composed of a *jagati*, *tripatta-kumuda*, *kantha* sandwiched between two *kampa* courses and *pattika*. *Tri-ratha* design results into a central *bhadra* niche (*devakoshtha*) and corner *karna* niches. All the niches are bereft of images. Second *tala* has arrangement of *kuta-sala-kuta* on each side. Niches have been provided on the *sala*, and the images installed in these niches are of *Vinadhara-Dakshinamurti* in the south, *Vishnu* in the west and *Brahma* in the north. Niches are also provided on the *griva* in the uppermost third tier (*tala*) of the *shikhara*. It houses the same icons as of the second *tala*.



Ganas over lintel

Earlier the temple was assumed constructed during the reign of the Chola king Aditya I taking evidence of an inscription (no 33 of Inscriptions of Pudukkottai State). However a later discovered inscription clearly states that in the fourteenth regnal year of the *Chola* king *Parantaka I, Mahimalaya Irukkuvel* alias *Parantaka Vira Chola* alias *Kunjaramallan* appointed the priests of the *Tiruppudisvaram* temple to conduct worship in the new temple of *Mudukundamudaiyar*. This suggests that the *Tiruppudisvaram* temple was a separate and distinct temple<sup>25</sup>. Barrett<sup>26</sup> places the temple in around 921 CE, taking Mahimalaya, the builder of the temple, as a contemporary of Parantaka I and Gandharaditya. An inscription at Nirpalani<sup>27</sup> also confirms contemporaneity of the Irukkuvel chief Parantaka Vira Chola alias Mahimalaya with the Chola king Gandharaditya (950-956 CE). Based upon these evidences, the temple may be placed in the first half of the tenth century CE.

**Inscriptions** – Various inscriptions found in the temple complex are provided below.

1. *On a pillar in the mandapa in front of the central shrine*<sup>28</sup> – refers to the twenty-first regnal year of the *Chola* king *Rajakesarivarman*, identified with *Aditya I*, corresponding 892 CE – Records gift for a perpetual lamp to the temple of Tiruppudisvarattu Mahadeva at Kodumbalur in Urattur-kurram.
2. *On the west wall of the same mandapa*<sup>29</sup> – refers to the seventh regnal year of the *Irukkuvel Ko-Parakesari Irukkuvel* – records a gift of tax-free land by Virachola Muvendiravelan to the deities consecrated at Tirumudukunram for food offerings and festival days. The deities were installed by the kanmalar and Alakan Virachola-visvakarma who belonged to the udankut-tam (of the king).
3. *On the north wall of the same mandapa*<sup>30</sup> – refers to the ninth regnal year of Parakesarivarman alias Virachola Irukkuval – seems to record a gift of land
4. *On the base of the mandapa in front of the central shrine*<sup>31</sup> – refers to a regnal year of the Chola king Rajakesarivarman, identified with Parantaka Sundara Chola II (957-970 CE) – refers to a dispute between certain individuals and a meeting of two nagaram of Kodumbalur was held to decide over the matter
5. *On the south wall of the mandapa in front of the central shrine*<sup>32</sup> – refers to the sixth regnal year of the Chola king Kulothunga III, corresponding 1184 CE – mentions Se Udaiyan of Alankoyil in Kodumbai (Kodumbalur) repaired the tank with its steps, and set up images of Dakshinamurti, Tirumal (Vishnu), Ayan (Brahma) and two dvarapalas



6. In the same place<sup>33</sup> – refers to certain regnal year (lost) of the Chola king Kulothunga – records that Konattu-Pallavadaraiyan of Kodumbalur died in the strife at Periyakulam. A grant is made for a lamp to burn for his merit.
7. *On the wall to the north of the staircase of the central shrine*<sup>34</sup> – refers to the sixth (or sixteenth) regnal year of the Pandya king Maravarman Sundara Pandya I, as per the astronomical details the date should be Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 1232 CE – mentions a gift made by a certain individual during Tiruvottasama-sandi in the temple of Tirumudukunramudaiya-Nayanar at Kodumbalur
8. *On the north wall of the mandapa*<sup>35</sup> – refers to certain regnal year of the Pandya king Maravarman Pandya I, as per the astronomical details the date comes to Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1243 CE – mentions grant to restore tiruvottasama-sandi (midnight service) by a certain individual, a sivabrahman of the Tiruvagattichchuram temple at Karaiyur in Chalapandya-valanadu. The god is referred as Tirumudukunramudaiya Nayanar of Kodumbalur in Urattur-kurram, a subdivision of Kadaladaiyadilangai-konda-cholavala-nadu.
9. *On the north wall of the mandapa*<sup>36</sup> – the temple is referred as Tirumudukunramudaiya-Nayanar in Urattur-kurram in Vada-konadu
10. *On the south wall of the same mandapa*<sup>37</sup> – refers to some regnal year of the Pandya king Jatavarman Sundara Pandya – details not available
11. *On the north wall of the same mandapa*<sup>38</sup> – refers to some regnal year of the Pandya king Jatavarman Sundara Pandya – details not available
12. *On the south wall of the mandapa*<sup>39</sup> – dated in the seventeenth regnal year of the Pandya king Jatavarman Vira Pandya I, astronomical details dates it to Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1269 CE – records a land sale deed in auction to the temple of Tirumudukunramudaiya-Nayanar at Kodumbalur in Urattur-kurram, a subdivision of Konadu alias Kadaladaiyadilangaikonda-chola-valanadu by kaikkolamudalikal of the village.
13. *On the south wall of the mandapa*<sup>40</sup> – dated in the seventeenth regnal year of the Pandya king Jatavarman Vira Pandya – the available portion mentions the temple of Tirumudukunramudaiya-Nayanar at Kodumbalur in Urattur-kurram, a subdivision of Konadu alias Kadaladaiyadilangaikonda-chola-valanadu
14. *On the north wall of the kitchen*<sup>41</sup> – dated in the fifth regnal year of the Pandya king Maravarman Tribhuvana Kulasekharadeva – mentions building of the kitchen by the nattavar pf udusolkudi-nadu. The temple is referred as Tirumudukunramudaiya-Nayanar at Kodumbalur in Urattur-kurram, a subdivision of Konadu alias Kadaladaiyadilangaikonda-chola-valanadu

15. *In the same place*<sup>41</sup> – dated in the forty-second regnal year of the Pandya king Maravarman Tribhuvana Kulasekharadeva – mentions that a piece of land, earlier endowed to the temple of Tirumudkunramudaiya-Nayanar, being unfit for cultivation was handed over to a certain individual to make it fit for cultivation while paying to the temple to carry out wishes of the original donor.
16. *On a second pillar in the mandapa*<sup>42</sup> – dated in fifth regnal year of a king whose name is lost – mentions a certain individual
17. *On a pillar in the mandapa*<sup>43</sup> – registers the gift for the pillar

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